

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUEBEC 0095

EXDIS

FOR EUR-DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY VINE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, CA, US
SUBJECT: MR MORIN GOES TO WASHINGTON: WILL MR LEVESQUE FOLLOW?

1. RICHARD POULIOT, QUEBEC DEPUTY ASSISTANT MINISTER OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, CALLED ME THIS MORNING TO INFORM ME THAT CLAUDE MORIN WILL BE IN WASHINGTON APRIL 12-13. MORIN HAS INVITATIONS TO "LUNCH" WITH THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB AND TO SPEAK AT JOHNS HOPKINS CENTER OF CANADIAN STUDIES. WHILE IN WASHINGTON, MORIN WISHES CALL ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY VINE. TO THIS END, POULIOT INFORMED THAT THAT HE HAS ALREADY BEEN IN CONTACT WITH MICHEL DE GOUMOIS, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE IN OTTAWA, ASKING THAT GOC ARRANGE MEETING WITH VINE. POULIOT SAID THAT MORIN WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION TO BEING ACCOMPANIED ON HIS VISIT TO VINE BY SOMEONE FROM CANADIAN EMBASSY. GOQ NOW AWAITING REPLY FROM DE GOUMOIS IN OTTAWA. POULIOT INDICATED THAT THEY ARE SOMEWHAT APPREHENSIVE AS GOC SEEMS NOT TO HAVE TAKEN KINDLY TO RECENT SPATE OF VISITS TO US BY QUEBEC OFFICIALS.

2. THIS SUDDEN WILLINGNESS TO PASS REQUESTS FOR MEETINGS WITH USG OFFICIALS THROUGH OTTAWA REPRESENTS A CONSIDERABLE VOLTE
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FACE IN ATTITUDE ON PART OF GOQ. BELIEVE IT MAY ALSO BE RELATED TO CONVERSATION I HAD LAST WEEK WITH LEVESQUE'S SENIOR ODD JOB SPECIALIST, YVES MICHAUD. IN COURSE OF WHAT INITIALLY PROMISED BE RELATIVELY INCONSEQUENTIAL CONVERSATION ON NATIONAL FETE BEING PLANNED FOR NEXT JULY 3. MICHAUD SUDDENLY ASKED WHETHER PREMIER LEVESQUE, IF HE VISITED WASHINGTON, COULD BE RECEIVED BY SENIOR USG OFFICIALS. I TOLD HIM THAT I THOUGHT A SUITABLE

OFFICIAL RECEPTION COULD BE ORGANIZED FOR M LEVESQUE, AS A PROVINCIAL PREMIER, PROVIDED THE REQUEST WAS PASSED THROUGH CANADIAN EMBASSY. MICHAUD THEN ASKED WHETHER ANY OTHER CANADIAN PROVINCIAL PREMIERS HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY US PRESIDENTS. I TOLD HIM THAT I DID NOT KNOW BUT THAT ANY REQUEST FOR A PRE-SIDENTIAL MEETING WOULD HAVE TO BE CHanneLED THROUGH THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT. SHOULD THIS BE DONE, I ASSURED HIM. IN MOST NON-COMMITAL FASHION, THAT THE REQUEST WOULD RECEIVE "SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION." IN DISARMINGLY OFF-HANDED WAY, MICHAUD REPLIED THAT GOQ QUITE AWARE OF NEED RESPECT FEDERALIST FORMS IN ITS DEALINGS WITH US AND WOULD WISH DO NOTHING EMBARRASS USG OR GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. MORIN'S REQUEST, COMING A WEEK AFTER MICHAUD'S INFORMAL CHAT, SUGGESTS TWO MAY BE RELATED AND THAT ONE OF MAIN PURPOSES OF MORIN'S VISIT IS TO TEST WASHINGTON WATERS IN PREPARATION FOR SUBSEQUENT VISIT BY LEVESQUE.

3. COMMENT: QUEBEC INITIATIVE MUST PRESENT GOC WITH DILEMMA.

IF THEY AGREE TO REQUEST, MORIN WILL HAVE SUCCEEDED IN CRACKING AMERICAN OFFICIAL STONEWALL, ALBEIT WITH BOTHERSOME CANADIAN TAG. SHOULD GOC REDUSE, MORIN CAN CRY FOUL CLAIMING THIS AS YET ANOTHER INDICATION OF UNREASONABLENESS OF GOC IN REFUSING ACCOMMODATE "LEGITIMATE" QUEBEC REQUESTS EVEN WHEN GOQ PLAYS GAME WITHIN FEDERAL RULE. BEST COURSE FOR US FOLLOW, I BELIEVE, IS TO SEE HOW CANADIANS HANDLE MATTER. IF THEY
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ACCEDE TO THE MORIN VISIT WITH VINE, THEN I THINK WE WOULD HAVE NO PLAUSIBLE REASON TO REFUSE.

4. CONTENTS OF THIS MESSAGE HAVE BEEN COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY OTTAWA. MCNAMARA

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